Washington State Department of Early Learning

DEL Winter ECEAP Directors Meeting Minutes
March 5 - 6, 2009

Contractors: Beth Daneker, Beth Hansen, Bonnie Wickler, Charles Hill, Claire Wilson, Connie Mueller-Troka, Debbie Lee, Dee West, Dianna Hanlon, Dorlan Hergesheimer, Doug Lehrman, Enrique Garza, Graciela Cardenas, Janet Anderson, Joanie Matter, Joe Varano, Karen Pharaoh, Karin Carter, Kathy Guenther, Katie Leid, Lacretia Warnstaff, Laurie May, Lexi Catlin, Lorraine Olsen, Lucinda Wiser, Lynn Harlington, Mary Tatham, Matthew Solomon, Mike Degman, Nancy Liedtke, Sage MacLeod, Sandra Szambelan, Sandria Woods-Pollard, Sandy Junker, Sandy Nelson, Stephanie Tinsley, Tamara Shoup, Tami Miller, Vern Nickelson

DEL Staff: Denise Bowden, Gina Lewis, Heike Syben, Joyce Kilmer, Judy Jaramillo, Karen Healy, Karen Tvedt, Lisa LaRue, Nimira Jetha, Susan Dunlap

Others: Joel Ryan (WSA), Pat Brinkman (Head Start T&TA), Silvia Gil (JLARC), Marina Espinosa & Alison Cusick (Washington Dental Services Foundation), Cissy McCormick (Olympia School District)

Absent: Chelan-Douglas Child Development Association, Family Services of Grant County, Omak School District, Selah School District, Skagit Valley College ECEAP, Walla Walla Public Schools

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Welcome
Karen Tvedt, DEL Interim Director, welcomed ECEAP Directors to Olympia. She acknowledged the importance of ECEAP and thanked participants for their hard work during the recent expansion. She stated that the Governor protected ECEAP in her budget. Karen has been focusing on relationships within DEL and throughout the state's early learning system. Participants asked:

Q: What is happening with the bill to extend the authorization period for the Working Connections Child Care subsidy program?
A: (Updated answer) HB 1754 did not pass out of its House of origin by the March 12 deadline. However, it may still be live as a budget item. There is conversation of a study to clarify the costs, instead of immediate implementation. Karen has asked the federal Child Care Bureau for technical assistance with computing the costs of a longer authorization period.

Q: Is there concern that the Legislature will reduce ECEAP because of short-term Head Start funds in the federal stimulus package? WSA has received emails from policymakers exploring this.
A: The Governor strongly supports protecting ECEAP. Both the ECEAP statute and Head Start have regulations prohibiting supplantation.

Q: What is happening with the basic education finance bill?
A: It has been changed several times during this legislative session. The live version is HB2261. We will know more after March 12.

Introductions

- Silvia Gil was present from the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC). She is learning more about ECEAP as part of her upcoming report to the Legislature on DEL.
- Pat Brinkman was at the meeting on Thursday, representing the Head Start state-based training and technical assistance (Booz Allen Hamilton).
- Joel Ryan joined Thursday morning, representing the Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP.
- Participants introduced themselves at their tables with their Steering Committee groups.

Steering Committee

- Joyce Kilmer reviewed the role of the ECEAP Steering Committee, which is to give input to DEL on ECEAP policy, procedures and directors meeting agendas. This group of eight directors meets with DEL ECEAP staff by teleconference on the 4th Monday of each month. Each committee member serves as the representative for four other ECEAP directors and maintains communication with them.
- Steering Committee branches elected representatives and alternates to fill expired terms or vacancies. The new roster will be posted on the DEL Web site.

DEL Announcements

- <u>No-one-time funds</u> this year. If any contractors do not fully expend their ECEAP funds by June 30, the money will be returned to the state general fund.

- <u>ECEAP Funding Renewal Applications are due March 30</u>, for those who want an ECEAP contract for the next biennium. The application is posted on the DEL Web site, with instructions. There is no need to send a biennial budget.

- <u>DECA materials must be ordered by March 30</u>, using the surveymonkey tool on the DEL Web site. DEL will pay for DECA assessment materials, or e-DECA uses, for all contractors who turn in their order by this date. This is the time, each year, that you choose whether you prefer e-DECA (web-based), paper DECA, or a combination. DEL is encouraging use of e-DECA, for ease in scoring and compiling results. Please send just one survey per ECEAP contractor.

  Participants discussed pros and cons of e-DECA:
  - Pro: e-DECA scores automatically, saving quite a bit of time over paper DECA. Also, e-DECA produces reports quickly, and the "Classroom-at-a-glance" report is especially

helpful. There is also a report that works well to discuss results with parents. If you use e-DECA, you don't have to compile a report for DEL – Devereux sends the results directly to DEL. e-DECA allows you to print a paper assessment for parents to complete.

- o Cons: Some staff struggle with the transition to an electronic tool. However, it is simpler than many other electronic tools that are already in use, so it is just a matter of learning something new. Some teachers do not have access to a computer in their classroom/office.

Q: Is there a way to send parents an electronic DECA assessment form?
A: No, Devereux does not have this capacity, but they hope for it in their future system (timeframe unknown). You can print the assessment to give to parents from e-DECA, or email the pdf to parents, so that they can print and return it.

Many ECEAP programs in schools are using DECA as one measure of progress on a child's IEP. It works well with positive behavioral support.

- Survival words CDs The same surveymonkey allows contractors to request CDs to help staff learn to pronounce "survival words" in various languages spoken by ECEAP families.

- DECA results are due to DEL by June 30, for your fall 2008 and spring 2009 assessments. Contractors who use e-DECA have all signed releases so DEL can obtain the data directly from Devereux. Contractors using paper DECA must complete the report form which is on the DEL Web site.

Logo use

There have been many questions about which ECEAP publications require use of the DEL logo. In general, use the logo on publications intended for an audience outside of your ECEAP program, such as your marketing materials or annual reports to your community. It is not required on all agency reports, just those related to ECEAP.

ECEAP Enrollment
- ECEAP is now serving the most families ever! Also, even though we added 1,145 slots this year, a higher percentage of slots are full each month than compared to previous years.

- There are 8,231 children currently enrolled (five more than our 8,226 slots).

- There are 2,610 children on ECEAP wait lists as of January 31.

- DEL monitors enrollment daily and discusses low enrollment with contractors. Before a decision to reallocate slots, DEL discusses strategies to increase enrollment and any special or temporary circumstances. DEL works with the contractor to determine a deadline by which they will return unfilled slots.

- When a contractor can't fill slots, they are reallocated to ECEAP contractors with:
  o History of full enrollment; waiting lists
  o Ready facilities and staff
  o High percentages of 4-year-olds
  o High compliance with ECEAP standards

- DEL is proposing this language for the ECEAP contract: "The contractor must… maintain full enrollment of funded slots. DEL reserves the right to reclaim slots and funds, or reallocate slots to other Contractors, if a Contractor is unable to maintain full enrollment or impacts enrollment of neighboring ECEAP or Head Start programs."
  o Contractors propose that DEL include language around working with the contractor on resolving low enrollment, before reducing slots. DEL will incorporate this.

- Participants brainstormed tips for full enrollment, including:
  o Begin recruitment in spring. Enroll siblings or returning students in March.
  o Maintain accurate waiting lists.
  o Require prompt reporting of vacancies from sites.
  o Beginning classroom services for children who are on the waiting list, when space allows, using other funding sources.
  o Sharing waiting lists monthly with other community preschools, to fill all programs.
  o Promoting that we are not full until all of our sites are 100% full. Each site is expected to share their waitlist at center director meetings, to help other sites fill.
  o Incorporating publicity with other agency programs. The City of Seattle includes ECEAP brochures with City Light bills, for example.
  o Have a day where every staff member does ECEAP publicity –distributing posters, knocking on doors in low-income neighborhoods, etc.
  o Like Doug said, "What the leader pays attention to, staff will prioritize."

- Note that there is no change to the ECEAP Child Enrollment Form this year. The version on the Web site is correct for 2009-10.

ECEAP Contract
The proposed changes for the ECEAP contract were introduced today, for tomorrow's discussion. Please see the notes for Friday, below.

Approaches to medical exams and dental screenings
Kathy Guenther (Centralia College), Lynn Harlington (EPIC), Graciela Cardenas (Granger School District), Janet Anderson (Olympic Community Action Agency) and Beth Hanson (St. James Family Center) presented how they ensure that children receive medical exams and dental screening within 90 days of their class start date.

Here are panelists' ideas for accomplishing medical exams and dental screenings:

- Engage families from the moment they walk in the door, making sure they understand the importance of completing these exams.
- Talk about medical and dental exams at spring pre-registration, home visits or family support meetings, and during orientation. Remind parents in several ways that it's a requirement and best for the well-being of their children.
- Have someone follow-up with families during the summer, to complete as many exams as possible before school starts.
- Develop partnerships with pediatric clinics, community health clinics, and dental offices. Build relationships with providers. Recruit doctors and dentists for your health advisory committee. Give annual awards to providers who assist. It is slow work, but produces results.
- Encourage each staff member to maintain their personal connections with medical and dental providers, enlisting their support in making sure ECEAP children receive services and encouraging them to accept Medicaid.
- Work with the ABCD program. They connect families with local dentists.
- In medically-underserved areas, bring the services to the children. For example, bring dental clinics on site for all children, paid through Medicaid. One program used a Washington Dental Foundation grant for Durafluor (fluoride varnish) clinics.
- Book a Saturday at a dental or medical office, and schedule your children all at once.
- Find community resources to pay for exams and screenings.
- Involve every single staff member in encouraging parents to complete exams. Make sure all staff understand the requirements and value of the exams. In one program, the health coordinator identifies who still needs exams and gives the list to every teacher, aide, bus driver, secretary, kitchen staff, etc. They engage in "respectful harassment" whenever one of them encounters a parent on the list. The feedback from families is that they feel good about getting it accomplished.
- Make sure staff and subcontractors know the importance of <u>entering completion dates in EMS.</u>
- Make it easy for medical providers to return exam results, by taking parent consent forms to the medical office all at once and setting a date to pick up all results. This is less work for them than handling them one-at-a-time.
- Establish one staff person as point-of-contact with each provider.
- See EPIC's Dear Doctor and Dear Dentist letters, which explain what is required and why.
- Provide transportation as needed.
- Develop a tracking system so everyone can see who still needs exams and which sites need to focus on this.
- Increasing the number of family support staff (who do health follow-ups) made the difference in one program that completed 100% of exams within 90 days. These family support staff build relationship with families, plan and identify barriers. They also get release forms from families so the ECEAP staff can request exam results directly from medical providers.
- Let parents know that the Medicaid reimbursement rate is significantly lower than providers usual rates, and that the parent responsibility is to show up on time.

Washington Dental Service Foundation

Marina Espinosa & Allison Cusick explained WDSF services that are free and applicable to ECEAP. The ABCD Program has an enhanced reimbursement rate for dentists. Cavity Free Kids is an oral health curriculum for preschool. The Smile Mobile is available in some medically underserved communities.

Q: Why isn't the Smile Mobile available in our underserved county?
A: WDSF works in partnership with the county and provides three years of funding. Contact 1-800-572-7835 x 6303 or smilemobile@deltadentalwa.com.

Q: Can we get more copies of the brochure "Taking Care of Your Child's Baby Teeth" ?
A: Yes. These are free and in several languages. Order at http://www.withinreachwa.org/ordermaterials_qty.

Comment: In one county, dentists want to get out of ABCD because they are not getting reimbursed. Also, if children have major dental problems, there is no one in the county who can provide treatment.

ECEAP Outcomes

<u>Our goal is to be able to show the effectiveness of ECEAP to policymakers, taxpayers and others, so that they understand the value of investing in ECEAP.</u>

ECEAP Outcomes should:
- Tell the **whole** ECEAP story -- health, family, and child outcomes
- Produce statewide results (ability to compile data from all ECEAP)
- Build on what we are <u>already</u> doing
- Be authentic, based on observation over time
- Not interrupt children's play and learning
- Not be too time consuming for Contractor staff
- Be affordable, including training and materials

DEL staff have begun compiling indicators for child development, family services, and health from tools used within ECEAP programs and nationally. DEL is surveying family support staff on March 11 and 13, for a first review of the family support indicators. DEL intends to take the compiled health indicators to the Health Consortium meetings, beginning in May.

For the past several years, we have responded to requests for ECEAP child outcomes data with partial state DECA results. This has been a way to start meeting the requests. This year, we will have DECA results for all of ECEAP. However, since DECA shows social-emotional results only, we must develop a way to report on other child development domains and other ECEAP components.

Discussion on ECEAP Outcomes

Big Question #1 How should we show that child and family changes can be attributed to participation in ECEAP? Comparing our own fall and spring data is not sufficient; we can't tell what is the result of ECEAP and what changes are from maturation or other influences.

- PSESD has their own teacher-administered early literacy and early math checklist. The results for 4-year-olds, in their year before kindergarten, shows that ECEAP and Head Start children with two years of services score higher than children with one year of services. If improvements were due to maturation, there would be no difference between these groups.
- City of Seattle ECEAP, Step Ahead preschool, and Head Start programs within the school district are piloting use of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) for all children. This assesses receptive vocabulary (children point to a picture, when the test administrator says the word). Since this test is nationally-normed by months of age, an improvement in score over the school year is considered more improvement than would be expected through maturation. City of Seattle has not yet made the decision whether or not to continue the PPVT.
- Use of a control group is the most common way to prove that results are due to an intervention. If ECEAP children were assigned unique identifier numbers that followed them into K-12, they could be compared to children with similar income, first language, and other family characteristics. This approach could compare kindergarten assessment results, grades, and later tests as funding allows. It would be very important to compare them to a control group of children who would have been income-eligible (110% FPG) but did not receive Head Start, ECEAP or similar services.

Big Question #2   How should we create a statewide report of ECEAP child outcomes, for policymakers and taxpayers? Options include:

- One common child assessment. Example: Maryland and Georgia have adopted the Work Sampling System.
- Multiple common assessments. We may need more than one tool, but these are the same across the state.
- A menu of child assessment tools to choose from, with software to aggregate statewide data. Example: Kentucky.
- A common data reporting form, and contractors can choose how they collect information to complete the form. Examples: Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF) used in special education, Head Start indicators.

Small Group #1 - Use the same child assessment tools statewide (about 6 participants)

- This is the no fuss, no muss approach. It is more manageable for staff who move between subcontractors.
- We need to get to it and choose a tool for legislative reports, so that we can get our focus on assessment to inform instruction.
- For example, choose a "battery" of assessments – DECA, an academic assessment, and a parent/home environment survey.

- Tailor curriculum to local needs and individual children, but use the same assessment(s).
- We would need more than one tool, but all tools would be used by all ECEAP.
- Make sure tools are culturally-relevant and appropriate for urban and rural children.
- Consider tools that could be used through the primary grades, maybe through 6th grade.
- What tools are used in Maryland and Georgia? (Answer: Work Sampling – which can be used through grade three).
- What assessment tools were used in the Perry Preschool research?

Small Group #2 – Let ECEAP Contractors choose from a menu of child assessments, with DEL creating software to compile statewide results. (This was the largest group)
- There is not one tool that can fit all programs/communities.
- This option gives contractors flexibility. It is a win-win.
- There would be costs – software development, training, materials.
- We would need common, aligned outcomes. Keep these simple. Could adapt from *Benchmarks*, EALRs, and Head Start indicators.
- We could use tools that both inform instruction, and allow a statewide report to the public.
- Potential tools, available online, include Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum, Work Sampling and High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR).

Small Group #3 – Have an ECEAP child outcomes reporting form, and each Contractor can choose how they collect the results. (Second-largest group)
- We need the flexibility to continue using own assessment tools that interact with our school districts and fit the diversity of our communities.
- It is important to identify indicators for a statewide report, and let contractors select tools and methods.

Small Group #4 – Other ideas (About 8 participants)
- It is important to measure long term outcomes.
- Connect ECEAP outcomes with the k-12 system.
- Values come from the family, and translate into actions and behaviors (learning). Possible measures include attendance, citizenship, school engagement, values about education.
- Research values that make people successful, and measure those. (Does this align with the Approaches to Learning section of the *Benchmarks?)*
- Look for values that translate into observable actions that can be quantified.
- Capture data on parent role in supporting child's success, influenced by ECEAP parent training and parent conferences.
- How do we change whatever has broken down – that leads to drop out rate – with child or family or school? These are system issues. Does it start with families, communities, Obama?

Additional whole group discussion points, regarding statewide ECEAP child outcomes reporting:
- Plan for costs – training, assessment materials, possibly state software.

- Simplicity is key – especially if the Legislature is the audience. Pull out a handful of indicators and let contractors choose how to evaluate them, then report them to DEL.
- Since some ECEAP providers also have Head Start, special education, or school district assessment requirements and tools, can we allow use of the same tools?
- Once the state has a kindergarten assessment tool, can we use this at the beginning and end of the ECEAP 4-year-old year also? This would also show if results drop over the summer (presuming children are also assessed fall of their kindergarten year.)
- If we use a common tool too often, it becomes invalid.
- There is not one tool that does it all; each has pros and cons. No one thing will give us the whole picture.
- Assessing preschoolers through observation over time is appropriate. Don't use one-time testing just because it is easier.
- Use research-based tools.
- Neither the *Benchmarks* nor the assessment tool should drive the curriculum. Curriculum should be adapted to what we know about the local population and individual children.
- We need plenty of time to prepare our staff for any changes.
- This could be a time to plan, so that we are ready when the state's funding picture changes.
- We would need a longitudinal study (and $$$) to show a return on investment. (For now, we are focusing on annual statewide data reporting.)
- Instead of focusing on individual children's achievement, we need to look at the influences on the children – home life issues and stressors that affect learning. Can we measure these? Is there a family stress measurement?
- See the work on "complex trauma" which takes the whole child and their environment into consideration.
- Another approach is to compare the cost of ECEAP with the cost of not being prepared for kindergarten. (Pennsylvania just completed a study of this.)
- Seattle pre-k initiatives (Step Ahead, ECEAP, and Head Start) have developed a city-wide kindergarten readiness assessment that they are vetting in April. It is culturally-specific to Seattle.
- We use child assessment to inform instruction; we are not sure that this data should be used for program evaluation.
  - Many contractors feel very comfortable (knowledgeable, etc) to collect data to inform instruction, but not comfortable collecting data to support the legislative request about how effective ECEAP is.
- To show the effectiveness of ECEAP, look at research about the impact of parent involvement on child's school success.
  - There are so many influences on families. How would we know that it is our parent meeting that made the difference?
- "Standardized" and "normed" are not magical concepts. The NRS was "normed" with Head Start kids!

- Standardized tests are already used at kindergarten entry in some school districts, to show that preschool is effective.
- We need to collaborate with OSPI and get a bigger work group. Include return on investment information when discussing preschool with OSPI.
- Show *how* ECEAP is effective (not *if* ECEAP is effective.)
- Include the qualitative side of "telling our story". Tell anecdotes to legislators, individually.

Questions:
- How long have other states (Maryland, Georgia and Kentucky) been compiling state pre-K outcomes and what can we learn from their results?
- Can we use ECEAP Performance Standards as indicators for now? (No, these are inputs, not outcomes.)

Friday, March 6, 2009

ECEAP Client Services Contract 2009-11
- The ECEAP contract language is under revision to make it easier to read and use, to consolidate program expectations, and to align with DEL and state contracts.
- DEL staff will take the comments from February DEL Steering Committee teleconference and today's discussion and include those in the revision. The contract will be reviewed by DEL leadership and the Attorney General's office, then will come back to ECEAP Steering Committee.
- DEL will send contracts out after legislative session, when the state budget is approved.

Participants discussed the following proposed contract changes

- The contract face sheet will include the number of slots, percent of over-income slots allowed, and service area boundaries.
    o **Q:** Do we round up when the percent of over-income slots includes a partial child?
      A: Use usual math rules. Round up if .5 or higher.
    o Describe your service area boundaries in your Funding Renewal Application, due March 30. DEL will contact you to resolve any conflicts. Use the most simple yet clear way to define boundaries (counties, school districts, streets…)

- There is new clarifying language (but not new expectations) on maintaining full enrollment, keeping EMS up-to-date, subcontracting, and which changes require advance approval from DEL.

- DEL may delete the requirement to submit an audit, using a fiscal review process instead. The fiscal review process is still under development; it will focus on ensuring that ECEAP funds are spent on ECEAP allowable costs.

- DEL will collect all requests to use ECEAP funds for federal match by September 30 of each year. Contractors will need to compute their request for the <u>state</u> fiscal year (July 1 to June 30).

- Contractors must send a representative to DEL ECEAP Director Meetings, as a requirement for working with your funder.
    - Comment: This is good, as long as DEL continues to support travel costs.

- DEL <u>may</u> change from the current ECEAP cost reimbursement system to monthly payment points.
    - Contractors would receive $X per funded slot per month, with less in the summer months when school is out-of-session, and more in the months when all ECEAP services are provided.
    - The budget page of the Contract will state, for example, "July – recruitment and enrollment, $300 per funded slots x72 slots = $21,600."
    - From our preliminary research, most Contractors will be OK with a standard formula. Others will have unique circumstances included in their contract. DEL would need to find out what activities each contractor spends on during July and August.
    - We will keep the option to bill twice monthly.
    - **Q:** What if a contractor does not fully expend by June 30? **A:** TBD
    - **Q:** Is there flexibility for large purchases early in the year, such as a playground? **A:** TBD
    - **Q:** Will there be technical assistance on how to apply this to subcontractors? **A:** Many are already using a "slot-rate" to subcontract.
    - **Q:** Do we still have to submit a Program Activity Report (PAF) each month? **A:** Yes, this documents that the services have been delivered before the state pays.
    - There may be a need for training for fiscal staff.
    - The fiscal review process will need to ensure that no more than 15% is spent on administrative costs.

- The deliverables list in the contract will be updated to list more of the items due to DEL each year through EMS or otherwise. This will make due dates easier to track.

- New language in contract, but not a policy change: ECEAP Contractors must ensure that Working Connections Child Care subsidy program (WCCC) is not billed for an ECEAP child for ECEAP classroom hours. Exception: The child care provider may bill both ECEAP and WCCC for the same hours when the child is enrolled in full-day, full-year child care in a blended ECEAP/licensed child care program that operates in compliance with ECEAP Performance Standards during all child care hours.

- "Begin preschool classes by September 30." This was the most complex contract issue and is still under discussion. About 15% of ECEAP classes started after this date last year. For 66 classes,

this is because the same facility is used for Migrant Head Start. Some of the other classes started late this year because they were new expansion sites. Others do not begin recruitment and enrollment until September.

- o Earlier start dates allow DEL to report enrollment levels to policymakers earlier in the year.
- o A narrower range of start dates would simplify DEL monitoring.
- o This item is still under discussion. There may be an exception for classes that share space with Migrant/Seasonal programs.
- o At minimum, Child Enrollment Forms (CEF) must be entered into EMS by October 15, with this minimum information -- child's name, birthdate, class start date, and site code. The remaining CEF information must be entered by November 15.

Managing ECEAP in Tough Budget Times
Steering Committee groups discussed the economic challenges they are facing and some possible ways to address these challenges. Comments included:

- Programs that only have ECEAP funds will be hurting if ECEAP is cut.
- Some programs use I-728 funds in blended classrooms with ECEAP. These funds are not in the Governor's budget.
- There may be a loss of some federal funds in school district ECEAP programs. The federal stimulus dollars may help.
- Additional special education funds in the stimulus package may help support integrated ECEAP programs.
- The Medicaid match (admin) has increased, which is an additional resource.
- As people lose jobs, families who paid for preschool are becoming ECEAP-eligible.
- Use different funds, such as pay the bus aide from school district funds.
- Community collaboration is important.
  - o Support each other and combine resources when possible.
  - o Share wait lists.
  - o Share facilities with non-profit groups.
  - o Collaborate to maximize training dollars.
  - o Communities are suffering; social services are stressed and facing cutbacks.
- Reduce, re-organize, streamline:
  - o Meet minimum ECEAP requirements only
  - o Reduce classroom hours (if now above 320 hours)
  - o Reduce staff hours. Ask first for voluntary cut-backs. Hire full FTEs instead of paying benefits to multiple part-timers. Consolidate roles.
  - o Travel, decrease mileage reimbursement
  - o Training and support for college tuition
  - o Reduce child transportation; if using school district busing, make sure all eligible children receive the higher reimbursement rate (Special ed, ELL, etc)
  - o Field trips

- o Coordinator positions
- o Review insurance, consolidate under one provider
- o Review benefit package, increase staff co-pays
- o Eliminate a subcontractor
- o Engage in fundraising
- There may be increased disparities between Head Start and ECEAP, for example, if Head Start receives a salary COLA.
- Our school district will support early learning, no matter what, because it attracts enrollment for K-12, in areas where families might choose a different district.
- We don't know how it will be, but we have a lot of experience making do with what we have.
- Even in bleak times, ECEAP keeps going, as those who have been around for some time know. We should be proud.

Criminal History Background Checks:

Judy Jaramillo from DEL explained the current child care background check procedure, which includes a criminal history check and a "character and suitability" check. This involves checking CPS records for founded charges and checking if any state licenses have been revoked. If the Legislature funds a DEL background check unit, we want to bring ECEAP under this same umbrella. Right now, adults who work with children in child care, schools, Head Start and ECEAP receive different levels of background checks. Some staff that would be excluded from work in child care are allowed to work in other settings.

Discussion:
- It becomes expensive when multiple background checks are required, especially multiple fingerprints. This is caused by the federal rule that doesn't allow sharing the fingerprint results between state agencies. A state "background check clearing house" would resolve this, but is not funded.
- How can response time be speeded up? It is expensive to double-staff while we wait. Child care requires a federal fingerprint check when the person hasn't lived in Washington for three years. These can take a long time, especially if the prints are faulty.
- DEL will contract with a company that will have fingerprint machines throughout the state. These are the scanning machines, rather than "ink and roll" processes, and produce better results. The ESDs already have these machines – can we create efficiencies with this?

Contractor Activity Reports:
- Xylitol Study – Charles Hill
  - o Kittitas Head Start and ECEAP increased toothbrushing to twice a day in the classroom, and used "EPIC" toothpaste with fluoride and xylitol. The results show fewer new cavities in children during that school year.
- Gates Foundation Projects
  - o Laurie May (South Bend School District) has engaged all child care centers and family home child care in the area. They all receive Creative Curriculum and Love & Logic training. Love & Logic is used in local schools, and the training is available for parents also. They are creating community norms, vocabulary, and shared experiences to support school readiness.

- o Cissy McCormick (Olympia School District) shared their pilot to integrate curriculum across early learning. They are implementing the Tools of the Mind curriculum in selected district preschools, community child care, Head Start and ECEAP as well as selected kindergarten classrooms.
- Health Care Institute – Joe Varano
    - o Joe showed a video introduction to this program, which educates parents about home care for common child care illnesses and about how to use the health care system. Results show increased parent confidence and reduced emergency room visits.
    - o **Q:** Can programs join the Health Care Institute for next year? **A:** No, this is the middle of a two-year project. There are no funds for new programs, but *may* be for the following year. If so, all ECEAP programs will receive notice.

Upcoming Dates
- Funding Renewal Applications, due March 30
- DECA forms orders, due March 30
- Service area agreements, due May 30
- Self-assessments, due June 30
- DECA results, due June 30